

**MISIDENTIFICATION OF *DIAPHANIA HYALINATA* (L.)
(LEPIDOPTERA: CRAMBIDAE: PYRAUSTINAE) IN THE
BRITISH LEPIDOPTERA FAUNA**

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The melon-worm, *Diaphania hyalinata* (L., 1767), a neotropical pyralid moth which is a major pest on some plants of the Cucurbitaceae from south of the United States to north of Argentina, has been mentioned by Kloet & Hincks (1972) and recently in Goater (1986), as a species collected in England. Goater (1986) pointed out: 'One



1



2

Figs 1-2. 1 *Diaphania hyalinata* (L.) male. 2 *Diaphania indica* (Saunders) male.

specimen of *D. hyalinata* in British Museum (Natural History) ex Mason coll., labelled as purchased from Knight, a collector, as British. This could be the specimen from Haworth's collection said by Stephens (1834), who also possessed "a pair captured in Devonshire, near Plymouth", to have been "taken near London by Mr. Knight". One of the Plymouth specimens is figured by Wood (1839). The species is a native of America'.

An examination of Mason's specimen deposited in the BM (NH) collections, has shown that it does not belong to *D. hyalinata*, but to *D. indica* (Saunders, 1851). These two species are easy to differentiate by the wing maculation and the coloration of the abdominal apex (Figs 1 and 2), as well as by external features such as: frons smoothly brown scaled, with lateral white margins up to the base of the antenna in both sexes in *D. hyalinata*, and without lateral white margins in *D. indica*; and males in *D. hyalinata* with posterior inner preapical tibial spurs modified into leaf-like structures, but normal (straight) in *D. indica*.

The specimen illustrated in Goater (1986, plate 6, fig. 5) is correctly identified as *D. hyalinata*, but it is not the one from the Mason collection from England, but an American specimen selected for photographic purposes from the *D. hyalinata* series, all of which are of American origin, in the BM (NH), because of the bad condition of the Mason specimen. The locality of the specimen figured by Goater is unknown, but we think it should be from America, because all specimens of this species in the BM (NH) collection are from there. For the reasons mentioned before, we suggest that *D. hyalinata* should be removed from the British Lepidoptera list and be replaced by *D. indica*.

D. indica is the most widespread species of the genus, having a pantropical/subtropical distribution. Its rare presence in England is most likely due to accidental introduction.

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